

Challenges in Continuity of Care for Postpartum Women and Children: Insights from a Study in Lithuania

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Continuity of care for postpartum women and their children is crucial for their optimal health and well-being during this critical phase of life. The health and social sectors play pivotal roles in creating a supportive environment, especially for vulnerable women and children. However, research on continuity of care in Lithuania is lacking. The study aims to uncover the related issues and is based on 23 qualitative interviews with mothers and specialists. The research data revealed problems with continuity of care, including interrupted maternal healthcare, lack of home visits, challenges in integrating social and healthcare sector support, limited accessibility to relevant information, and communication gaps. It emphasizes the importance of incorporating management, informational, and relational aspects for effective continuity of care. For postpartum vulnerable women and their children, healthcare home visits should be supplemented with social support for housing and nutrition, addressing their specific needs. Overall, ensuring continuity of care remains a critical area for improvement in postpartum health and social care.